

*Library Journal*, February 1, 2003, Paul Kaplan and Robert C. Cottrell, review of *The Boys of October*, p. 88.

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*Washington Post Book World*, December 15, 1985, review of *Hardball*, p. 6.\*

\* \* \*

# HOUGAN, James Richard

See HOUGAN, Jim

\* \* \*

# HOUGAN, Jim 1942-

(John Case, a joint pseudonym, James Richard Hougan)

**PERSONAL:** Name originally James Richard Edwards; name legally changed, 1960; born October 14, 1942, in Brooklyn, NY; son of Stephen Buhl Edwards (a soldier and night watchman) and Doris (Daly) Edwards Hougan; married Carolyn Johnson, December 16, 1966; children: Daisy Case, Matthew Edwards. *Education:* University of Wisconsin at Madison, B.S., 1966; attended Centro Interculturales de Documentacion, Cuernavaca, Mexico, 1971. *Politics:* "No matter who you vote for, the government always get in."

**ADDRESSES:** *Home*—Afton, VA, and Washington, DC. *Agent*—Elaine Markson Literary Agency, Inc., 44 Greenwich Ave., New York, NY 10011.

**CAREER:** Writer, novelist, investigative journalist, documentary filmmaker, and broadcaster. Social worker in Chicago, IL, 1966; *Capital Times*, Madison, WI, investigative reporter, 1968-71; *Harper's*, New York, NY, Washington editor, 1976—; president, Jim Hougan Associates, Inc., 1985—.

**MEMBER:** Writers Guild of America (East chapter), Boar's Head, Dynamite Club.

**AWARDS, HONORS:** Fellowships from Alicia Patterson Foundation, Maryland-Delaware Press Association, 1968-69, and Rockefeller Foundation, 1971-72; Hammett Prize nominee, North American Branch of the International Association of Crime Writers, 2003, for *The Eighth Day*.

## WRITINGS:

*Anticipating Machine* (poems), Quixote Press (Madison, WI), 1969.

*Decadence: Radical Nostalgia, Narcissism, and Decline in the Seventies* (nonfiction), Morrow (New York, NY), 1975.

*Spooks: The Haunting of America—The Private Use of Secret Agents* (nonfiction), Morrow (New York, NY), 1978.

*Secret Agenda: Watergate, Deep Throat, and the CIA* (nonfiction), Random House (New York, NY), 1984.

*Kingdom Come* (novel), Ballantine (New York, NY), 2000.

Contributor to popular and literary magazines, including *Nation*, *Playboy*, *Oui*, *Quixote*, and *Crawdaddy*, and to newspapers.

WITH WIFE, CAROLYN HOUGAN, UNDER JOINT PSEUDONYM JOHN CASE: THRILLER NOVELS

*The Genesis Code*, Ballantine (New York, NY), 1997.  
*The First Horseman*, Ballantine (New York, NY), 1998.

*The Syndrome*, Ballantine (New York, NY), 2001.  
*The Eighth Day: A Novel*, Ballantine (New York, NY), 2002.

*The Murder Artist*, Ballantine (New York, NY), 2004.

**SIDELIGHTS:** Jim Hougan is a novelist who writes under his own name and in collaboration with his wife, Carolyn, under the pseudonym of John Case. He has written both fiction and nonfiction works about the world of espionage. His research for *Secret Agenda: Watergate, Deep Throat, and the CIA* served him well when he began writing *Kingdom Come*, a thriller about a CIA agent on the run from his employers. In the novel, agent John Dunphy works undercover in London, where he is assigned to keep an eye on a



seemingly dull professor. When his subject is brutally slain, Dunphy is called off the case, interrogated for days, and finally reassigned to a stultifying desk job. To find out what is afoot, Dunphy uses an assumed name to request information about everyone involved, then routes the requests for information to himself. He eventually discovers that a secret society has been controlling world events for hundreds of years—an organization that now has its headquarters within the CIA. Events as diverse as the Cold War and UFO sightings are all revealed as part of a plot to shape history. Soon Dunphy and his beautiful girlfriend, Clementine, are running from one European capital to the next, gathering up pieces of the puzzle and trying to elude the killers who are following them. “Hougan demonstrates fine command of his material,” commented a *Publishers Weekly* reviewer. “His familiarity with the ways of spies, amply shown in his nonfiction, permeates his novel. Better yet, his writing is punchy and spare, his characterizations lively.” *Booklist* contributor David Pitt remarked: “Hougan . . . has combined realism and fantasy in a way that shouldn’t work but does—splendidly.”

*The Genesis Code*, the Hougans’ first novel under the John Case pseudonym, begins with the brutal deaths of international investigator Joe Lassiter’s sister Kathy and nephew Brandon. Determined to find their killer, Lassiter throws the full power of his investigative agency behind the case. He eventually discovers a pattern of murders of young mothers and their sons, all of whom are connected to an Italian fertility clinic headed by a doctor whose passions include current reproductive technology as well as theology. Lassiter’s investigation leads him to a secretive order of Roman Catholics and to a priest with a terrible secret before the pieces of the case fall into place. Case “writes with intelligence and flair,” and has produced “a first-rate thriller with an astonishingly timely revelation that’s well worth staying up late for,” concluded a *Publishers Weekly* reviewer.

Danny Cray, protagonist of *The Eighth Day: A Novel*, is a sculptor and part-time private investigator who thinks that his newest job will be a simple bit of online investigation that will allow him to take his P.I. work to full time. The few hours of online research turns out to be much more than expected as the investigation embroils Danny in an international plot. His client, Jude Belzer, turns out to be infamous and diabolical

cal billionaire Zerevan Zebek, a subterfuge that is only one of many mysteries that Danny will face as he confronts horrendous deaths, dangerous thugs, and devastating biotechnology with apocalyptic potential for destruction. A *Publishers Weekly* reviewer observed that the novel’s “pieces fit nicely together,” and that the book “is a satisfying and gripping read.” Case, “who writes so very well, keeps it all at a merry boil,” commented a *Kirkus Reviews* critic.

In *The Murder Artist*, TV journalist Alexander Callahan makes one final effort to reconnect with his identical twin sons after the turmoil of separation from his wife. During a summer visit to a Renaissance fair, however, the worst happens—the twins disappear, and Callahan is considered a suspect. Neither Callahan nor the police can explain a number of chillingly inexplicable objects in the boys’ home: a meticulously created origami rabbit, a bowl of water placed in a closet, and a stack of seven old Mercury dimes. Though he is eventually cleared as a suspect, Callahan is determined to locate his children and find out who took them. Por-ing over information on the Internet, Callahan discovers connections between other murders and kidnappings of young boys. His solo investigation eventually leads him to Louisiana bayou country, where he joins forces with an albino P.I. named Pinky to propel the case through discoveries about voodoo and the significance of twins in ancient magical rites. Callahan must race to rescue his sons before they become sacrificial victims of a deranged and deadly voodoo magician. Case’s “gripping pursuit of a warped monster doesn’t let go until the final showdown,” stated *Booklist* reviewer David Wright. “Brisk prose, a breathtaking plot, and realistic characters” propel the story, noted *Library Journal* reviewer Rebecca House Stankowski. *Entertainment Weekly* contributor Gilbert Cruz remarked that Case “crafts a wonderfully disturbing tale.” A *Publishers Weekly* reviewer called the novel “a long, winding narrative that’s impossible to put down.” Case “is quite frankly nothing short of brilliant here,” commented reviewer Joe Hartlaub on the *Bookreporter.com* Web site. “It’s all in the telling,” mused a *Kirkus Reviews* contributor, “and Case does it just right: no clue, moment, or character unturned.”

Hougan once told *CA*: “My vocational and avocational interests are impossible to separate in that each influences the other in ways that are often quite direct. Family, friends, mystery, and travel are the things most important to me.”



BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL SOURCES:

PERIODICALS

*Booklist*, December 1, 1999, David Pitt, review of *Kingdom Come*, p. 661; August, 2004, David Wright, review of *The Murder Artist*, p. 1904.  
*Entertainment Weekly*, October 15, 2004, Gilbert Cruz, review of *The Murder Artist*, p. 80.  
*Kirkus Reviews*, September 1, 2002, review of *The Eighth Day: A Novel*, p. 1248; August 1, 2004, review of *The Murder Artist*, p. 702.  
*Library Journal*, October 1, 2004, Rebecca House Stankowski, review of *The Murder Artist*, p. 66.  
*Publishers Weekly*, March 17, 1997, review of *The Genesis Code*, p. 78; January 3, 2000, review of

*Kingdom Come*, p. 56; September 2, 2002, review of *The Eighth Day*, p. 50; September 20, 2004, review of *The Murder Artist*, p. 46.

ONLINE

*Bookreporter.com*, <http://www.bookreporter.com/> (February 27, 2006), Joe Hartlaub, review of *The Murder Artist*.  
*International Thriller Writers Web site*, <http://www.thrillerwriters.org/> (February 27, 2006), biography of Jim Houghan.  
*John Case Home Page*, <http://www.johncase.com> (February 27, 2006).\*

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# Contents

Preface .....	vii
Product Advisory Board.....	xi
International Advisory Board.....	xii
CA Numbering System and Volume Update Chart .....	xiii
Authors and Media People Featured in This Volume.....	xv
Author Listings.....	1

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